

Minutes
Town of Acton Community Preservation Committee
September 11, 2014
Acton Memorial Library

Members Present: Peter Ashton (Chair), Peter Berry, Tory Beyer, Susan Mitchell-Hardt, Ken Sghia-Hughes, Joe Will (Clerk)

Others Present: Roland Bartl (Acton Planning Director), Roland Bourdon (Finance Committee observer); Bettina Abe (Acton Natural Resources Department), Neil Gordon (The Discovery Museums CEO), Bill Ryan (The Discovery Museums BOD Chair)

Peter A opened the meeting at 7:35 PM.

1. Annual Public Hearing (posted for 7:30 PM)

- Peter A read the Public Hearing notice.
- Bettina described a possible proposal from Natural Resources: Replacement of the 20+-yr-old Arboretum fern boardwalk to be ADA compliant, professionally built, and to cost about \$30K (\$25K for 200-ft boardwalk; \$5K for tree removal). Friends of Acton Arboretum and public boardwalk fund would contribute.
- Joe presented a three-page summary of extant funded Recreation Department projects and mentioned two possible proposals from Recreation: Phase II of the T. J. O'Grady Skatepark (see aforementioned summary) and wells to provide water for the Arboretum and Morrison Farm. No \$ amounts mentioned.
- Neil described an "investment in the outdoors" envisioned for The Discovery Museums (TDM) on 4.5 acres immediately adjacent to the Great Hill Conservation Land. There would be a nature-based playscape featuring an amphitheater, and a tree house (400-500 ft² indoors and ~200 ft² outdoors) that could hold up to 49 people. All would be inclusive in design. Entire cost would be \$500K-\$1M. Anticipated CPA proposal would be for 10-20%. TDM has talked, and is willing to collaborate, with Eileen Sullivan about her currently funded nature-playspaces project at the Acton Schools. TDM is talking with Tom Tidman about Great Hill accessibility. TDM could possibly involve students from Minuteman Tech with the project. Peter B urged that TDM talk to Roland to be sure that the proposal meets CPA criteria, likely as a recreation project. Roland pointed out a section (p. 8) in the 2015 Community Preservation Plan on how CPA funds can be used, and also the CPA Website that could provide ideas on what others have done.
- Roland pointed out that in keeping the Assabet River Rail Trail (ARRT) moving forward, we've gone through quite a chunk of the \$170K that was awarded in 2004. The ARRT design is being brought to completion next year. At a similar point in the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail project, it was helpful to have \$ available. It would be prudent to have a similar situation for the ARRT so that lack of \$ will not put the project at risk. Having new \$ not available until May would be no problem (ARRT work window this year was mid-April to the end of August). How much will be requested? Not sure yet.
- Peter A said that there will be no land-acquisition proposal coming from the Open Space Committee.
- It was moved, seconded, and voted unanimously to close the Public Hearing.

2. Issue 2015 Community Preservation Plan

The Committee reviewed the Recreation changes that weren't in the previous, otherwise final, draft. Peter A suggested minor corrections and a significant insertion of material that had been omitted in preparing this draft. Roland pointed out that the Town does not print the final document; rather it goes onto the Web—fairly soon after it is accepted.

- It was moved, seconded, and voted unanimously to accept the 2015 Community Preservation Plan.

3. Minutes of August 14, 2014

Peter A had a minor correction.

- It was moved, seconded, and voted unanimously to approve the minutes as corrected.

4. Project Updates and Status

Susan has updated the spreadsheet and will send it out. Regarding the distribution shell, IT will not put anyone onto the shell unless s/he is a member of the committee (or staff). For distribution to others, e.g., Roland Bourdon, Roland Bartl has to remember to add their names to the distribution list.

5. Administrative update

There does not appear to be much to do until project applications come in, so we will cancel the 09/25, 10/23, and 11/06 meetings. (We will not give up the room yet for 11/6.) The next meeting will be 10/09 and we may not even need that meeting . . . then 11/20 unless something comes up in the interim.

8:50 PM — It was moved, seconded, and voted unanimously to adjourn.